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THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

April, 1932



WALTER BARNES *on* Effective Colloquial
Language

WILLIAM R. SMITHEY *on* The Role of
Extra-Curricular Activities

JAMES ELLIOTT WALMSLEY *on* Effec-
tive History Teaching

A. R. MEAD *on* The Philosophy of Despair

News of the College

The Reading Table

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EFFECTIVE COLLOQUIAL LANGUAGE

AS HAS been announced, I am speaking to you as a representative of the National Council of Teachers of English. But, it should be added, I am not authorized by the Council to present the particular point of view of this address. I am here dealing with a somewhat controversial topic, and the National Council of Teachers of English as a body has not committed itself on these or similar points. Individual members of the organization would probably agree with much that I shall say, but the Council itself should not be thought of as standing sponsor for it.

I am to speak to you on effective colloquial language; on what is colloquial language and what are its qualities of effectiveness.

Many people have the notion that colloquial language is by its very nature inferior or incorrect; that when a word or phrase is dubbed "colloquial" it is outlawed from respectable speech. Indeed, I have frequently heard teachers state that an expression should not be used because the dictionary ranks it "colloquial."

Now, colloquial language is conversational language. It is the mode (or code) of communication used normally and appropriately in all the informal social situations of life. It is not inferior to any other style of language. As a matter of sober fact, colloquial language at its best should be regarded as the standard or norm for most kinds of speaking, as well as for much writing. The language of textbooks, the technical language of the trades and professions, and the language of literature are variations from this norm. They are special dialects; they

An address given over radio station WOR, Newark, N. J., on March 8, 1932.

are off-shoots from the parent stem. We are in serious and in ridiculous error when we rate these special dialects as superior to colloquial speech.

It is probable that ninety-nine per cent of all our language should be colloquial. Any other, any more studied style of speech is inappropriate, unnatural, socially and linguistically out of place—off key, off color. In conversation, discussion, informal argument and explaining, in story telling, in intimate letters; in all small groups and circles and in the highly socialized situations in life, effective colloquial language is the most normal means of communication. It is probably the most desirable style of language for our schoolrooms, as well as for dining-rooms and drawing-rooms. Our typical schoolroom English is dull, drab, and stilted; it is, to use the expressive current slang, "stuffy."

The schools have held up a standard of language which is far too stiff and academic, far too hifalutin and high-brow, far too pedantic and scholastic. We shall never have the right attitude toward language until we see that its basis is idiomatic speech, the vernacular, the free-and-easy, animated style of good conversation.

But it is not to be inferred from what has just been said that approved colloquial language may be the incorrect, crude, slouchy, slipshod speech of the back-alley. If one's language is rough and offensive, if it is marred by frequent glaring blunders—it is inadequate, ineffective, unsocial, no matter how "natural." *Good* colloquial speech requires much care and discrimination, makes many fine distinctions; it deserves and rewards thought, study, and practice.

What, then, is effective colloquial English?

In the first place, effective colloquial Eng-

lish in this country is not English at all, but American. That is to say, good conversational language in the United States should be in line with the established usages and practices *within this country*. We should use those pronunciations and expressions that are in good use within these United States, blandly ignoring what our cousins across the water or across the Canadian border might prefer. There is no reason why we should say "sweets" instead of "candy," "shop" instead of "store," "cinema" instead of "movie," "luggage" instead of "baggage." There is no earthly reason—certainly, no divine reason—why we should say "änt" instead of "ant," "nevue" instead of "nefew," "been" instead of "bin," "cemetery" instead of "cemetery." It is entirely an academic question whether the British words or pronunciations are more desirable than ours, more euphonious, or more firmly established historically. The only criterion is what is now approved usage in the United States. We shall gain nothing by affectation, by aping what is naively supposed to be a superior type of speech. Other things being equal—if they ever are—the more natural and the more national our language is, the less cluttered up by unusual, artificial usages that focus attention on themselves, the better.

Another problem of effective colloquial language comes under the spotlight when we turn to grammar and idiom. In general, the schools, the makers of textbooks and courses of study, editors of certain so-called "Good English" magazines, and grammarians and rhetoricians have been ultra-conservative with regard to grammar; they have multiplied petty and puerile distinctions between Tweedledum and Tweedledee; they have insisted upon usage that is highly "precious" and puristic. For example, most grammar texts and handbooks present elaborate and intricate distinctions between *shall* and *will*, distinctions which perhaps never have been made except by

the gerund-grinders, and which certainly would never be bothered about in colloquial speech. We are not really troubled by the difference between *shall* and *will* in conversational language. We should never use in idiomatic English that much-quoted sentence, "I *will* go; no one *shall* prevent me"; it would be recognized at once as an extremely artificial, un-English statement. We would probably say "I'm going to go—that's certain; no one can stop me"; or "I'm going, that's settled; there is no use to try to stop me"; or we would show the difference between volition and futurity by stress and intonation of voice. In short, there are made in grammar books detailed and difficult distinctions which are never observed in good colloquial language. We can blur almost all the shades of meaning between *shall* and *will* and never be conscious of a loss in clearness. We don't need to learn that un-English question "Shall you go?" because we should normally say "Are you going?" or "Do you expect to go?"—Thus the grammar racketeers manufacture empty, theoretical distinctions, at the same time ignoring urgent problems of colloquial speech.

The same pedantic point of view is illustrated by the common statement that one must not use a preposition at the end of a sentence—a preposition to end a sentence *with*. Users of effective colloquial language have no respect for such a statement. Prepositions often fall naturally at the end of sentences; indeed, such sentence structure is natural, almost inevitable, in colloquial language. It may be said in passing that prepositions often come at the end of sentences in the best literary language as well. This is merely another of those false rules made by grammarians.

Still another of the expressions insisted upon by the formalists and rejected by the advocates of good colloquial speech is illustrated by adverbs ending in *ly*. Purists and pedants insist, for example, that we should

say "go slowly," whereas the common and appropriate expression among good speakers—and writers—and on the sign-boards is "go slow." They have the same attitude toward words like "sure" and "fine." They fuss and fume because we say "Why sure I'll do it"; and would school-master us to say "Why surely I will do it." We must not say "That will do fine," but "That will do finely." Good colloquial practice pays no attention to such finical rules. It obeys, rather, the great "laws" or "drifts" of the language, the tendencies that make for reasonable naturalness, appropriateness, and democracy.

Effective colloquial speech is particularly rich in words and expressions which are direct, forceful, figurative, pictorial, humorous, emotional, which smack of the soil, which have color and warmth. The principles of effective colloquial speech are stubbornly set against fussy, fuzzy expressions. There is no reason why one should say "pass away" instead of "die," "mortician" instead of "undertaker," "cemetery" instead of "graveyard"—(I don't know why I am drawing all my illustrations from such sombre associations, unless it is that such affectations lead me to think of dealing out death and destruction.) Neither is there any reason why we should not use the normal, natural, commonplace expressions sanctioned by years of good usage. No one need hesitate to say "lots of people," even though the handbooks and rhetoric books "rage and imagine a vain thing," namely, that one should say "a number," or "a quantity."

Another example: Some time ago I noticed in a test a sentence which is said to contain three errors. The sentence is "At about eight o'clock one morning in late summer with a crowd of twenty-five people I started out on a sightseeing expedition." The maker of the test assures us that "at about" is not as good usage as "about" would be; that "crowd" is erroneous for

"party," "group," or "company"; and that "started out" is a crudity when used for "set out" or "set off." This is a good—or a horrible—example of the hair-splitting that has gone on for many years. And it suggests one reason why our English courses have not taught children to speak and write with force, freedom, and naturalness. (I suppose I shouldn't have said *reason why: reason that* is the rhetorical substitute. Isn't it piffle?) Really, we seem scared (or should I say "afraid") of the natural, expressive words of everyday life; we are easily shocked by words that have vitality and vigor. Recently, for instance, I heard a teacher object to a child's saying, "I stuck my hand in my pocket." She stated that *stuck* was rough and colloquial, and preferred "I *put* my hand in my pocket." The child's feeling for effective colloquial speech was better than the teacher's. Schoolmarms—of both sexes—seem to get nervous and fidgety in the presence of anything natural and robust.

One of the difficult phenomena of colloquial speech is slang. Perhaps I can do no better than repeat here what I said some time ago on this subject. Because we have held up literary, or rather, bookish, language as the model for everyday intercourse, and because, naturally and properly, slang is barred from literary and bookish language, we have jumped to the conclusion that slang is a linguistic crime, always to be condemned and punished. Purists argue that slang is coarse and vulgar. *Some* slang is coarse and vulgar, and many words in thoroughly approved usage, not slang at all, are coarse and vulgar; naturally one should avoid such words, whether slang or not. But many words which we stigmatize as coarse are, in reality, strong, vigorous, direct. "Beat it," "that's the limit," "I'm on to you," "punk," "swell," "swat," "scoot" are brusque, terse, forceful modes of expression; they are, to my way of thinking, better conversational English than their

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more staid and dignified literary synonyms. "Cut it out" is more graphic than "eliminate it"; "butt in" is more expressive than "intrude"; "spill the beans" is more picturesque than "injure the cause."

The pedagogs inform us that "slang impoverishes the language." Why, of course, if a girl calls everything "swell" and a boy terms everything "rotten," neglecting the synonyms that express the finer shades of meaning, they do impoverish their language, they make it poverty-stricken indeed. But this tendency is not peculiar to slang; many persons weaken their language through overworking certain words which are in well-established usage. We can, and many of us do, overwork "nice" and "fine." I met recently an intelligent woman who was "impoverishing her language" by calling everything "sweet." Almost everyone I know overworks the word "thing," employing it as synonymous with "idea," "thought," "plan," "point," "cause," "circumstance," "situation," instead of reserving it to designate a material concrete object. This is "impoverishing the language": to use frequently a broad, general, inexact word when we should use a narrow, specific, precise one, whether that general word is a waif from the music hall and the East Side or a highly respected child of Noah Webster's own lineage.

And in this connection we need to remember that slang has enlarged and enriched and strengthened our language, that thousands of words and phrases now in established use, rendering stout and gallant service in expression, have come into English through the door of slang. In fact, the refreshing and renewing springs of language are, first, creative literature and, second, colloquial speech. Our patrician language would find its blood running thin and its vital forces ebbing low, if it did not continually bring into the family the strong, crude offsprings of plebeian slang.

But of course I realize that a slang phrase

often becomes so popular that it displaces many useful words. "I'll say so," "You said it," "What do you know about that?" wear us out with their mere reiteration. Fortunately they wear themselves out and disappear like popular songs and novels—without leaving any trace upon the language. The fact of the matter is, many young people bandy about current slang phrases just to be in style, to be up to the minute, precisely as they wear the latest monstrosities in clothes. Some of our youthful friends wear nothing but the extremely and strangely modern in clothes and approve and use nothing but the very latest Parisian models in slang. Of course, that kind of slang and that kind of dressing are silly; but still I doubt whether we would seriously consider doing away with slang—or clothes—because some young people show no discretion in their use. Some one—doubtless some wiseacre from a college English department—has suggested that slang be not used by anyone under forty years of age. That *would* solve it. In the same way we could remove all the risks from dancing, automobiling, bathing, even from courting and marrying.

We must learn to use common sense and discretion in slang as in other arts and activities. We should regard slang as we regard other language phenomena. Some slang is cheap and coarse, some slang is rich and vivid; some slang is inane and pointless, some slang is apt and striking; but no slang, however novel and picturesque, should be permitted to become the dominant quality in our speech. I would not warn against all slang; I would warn against undesirable and excessive slang. I would not discriminate *against* slang expressions; I would discriminate *among* them.

Nothing that I have said about colloquial language will be construed, I hope, as meaning that there are not uses for the more formal and dignified types of speaking and

writing, or as meaning that effective colloquial speech may be devoid of nicety and distinction. Quite as much care and discrimination is needed in learning a natural effective colloquial style as in learning the more formal or the more literary style. And when learned, it serves as the basis of all successful language.

WALTER BARNES

THE ROLE OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ONE of the major problems now confronting American secondary education is the making of a scientific curriculum adapted and adjusted to the needs of modern youth in our dynamic social order. Attention to the high school curriculum has revealed a need for a clearer conception of the rôle of extra-curricular activities in the program of secondary education. It is beginning to be apparent that no high school curriculum can be considered adequate that fails to make provision for these activities. As a result of changes in the character of American society that place new responsibilities on the high school, the extra-curriculum of the school has become an important educative agency, an agency to furnish those activities which were formerly provided for in large measure by the home, church, and community but are now cared for in the regular curriculum, and which give the basis for growth in effective ways of living. The extra-curriculum should be an essential part of the regular curriculum for it has, like the regular curriculum of the school, the function of providing significant activities and experiences. The activities and experiences of the regular curriculum are usually considered as formal in nature under the direction and control of the school; the activities and experiences of the extra-curriculum may be considered as informal in nature under pupil direction and control but school su-

per vision. Both of these curricula are agencies to common ends—social efficiency and individual development. They are complementary the one to the other and there is no real distinction between the two. The principles for curriculum-making are the same as the principles for the making of the extra-curriculum. The criteria for the selection of subject matter are the same for both. The rôle of the extra-curriculum is identical with the rôle of the regular curriculum of the school.

Until the time arrives when the activities and experiences of the high school curriculum includes the present so-called extra-curricular activities, it will be necessary for the school to set up a program for the organization, administration and supervision of the extra-curriculum. Some of the principles which should govern this program may be stated as follows:

1. Pupils should participate in those activities that make strongest appeal to their interests, needs, and tastes.
2. The program of activities should, at least, embrace those fundamental activities that boys and girls engage in and each pupil should participate in at least three activities including one in literary or forensic endeavors; one in health; and one in his avocational, vocational, or social interests.
3. These activities should be so arranged and classified that they may be attached to the regular departments of the school. If this be done a proper balance will be secured between curricular and extra-curricular offerings.
4. The extra-curricular activities should be under pupil direction and control, and under teacher guidance and supervision.
5. The participation of a pupil in an activity should be based on his interest, ability, and good will; and no one should dominate. It should not be determined by his scholastic standing.

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6. The supervision and guidance of the school should encourage those pupils, who for many reasons, apparently lack interest in those activities of normal boys and girls to develop those interests through the proper type of participation.
7. The supervision and guidance of the school with reference to these activities should cause the pupils, who for many reasons, have developed unwholesome interests, undesirable social habits, and improper attitudes to become interested in wholesome activities and thus develop proper interests, habits and social attitudes.
8. Participation in extra-curricular activities should supplement and motivate the curricular work of the school.
9. Each activity should have a program of work in terms of desirable outcomes and definite objectives, and each pupil participating should make a contribution to the program.
10. The student organization and control of these activities should be so arranged that all pupils belonging to an activity would be eligible for managerial offices.
 - (a) The supervision and control on the part of the school should prevent certain pupils from monopolizing these activities.
 - (b) Students should be encouraged to set up certain eligibility standards for those activities, the work of which necessitates standards.
 - (c) Membership in the activities should be from the school at large.
11. The school should not require pupils to engage in extra-curricular activities which are designed primarily to secure funds for the school and the community.
12. Success in extra-curricular activities should be given some form of recognition by the school.

WILLIAM R. SMITHEY

EFFECTIVE HISTORY TEACHING

EFFECTIVE is not just a nice-sounding polysyllabic word. It must have a definite meaning. If our teaching is to be effective, we must know what we are to effect. I intend in this talk to assume that each of you has read a book, and therefore I will not give you any book ideas, nor any book terms, nor any cut-and-dried book theories. I will try to talk to you out of my own experience as to what seems to have proved effective in at least certain cases.

What, then, are we trying to do? To acquire such a knowledge of the past as will make us successful citizens of the present. I like to think of history as "a short cut to experience." Were it possible for me to live at all times and in all places I should need no history; I would know by experience. In lieu of this, I must short-cut it some way and solve the problems of other days vicariously.

How then shall I acquire this experience? By memorizing a list of dates, or preparing a chart of dates-events, or proving my ability to fill out one of those standardized tests that are so profitable to those who have standardized tests to sell? It seems to me almost self-evident that two things are necessary and in this order: (1) To know a certain number of facts thoroughly, definitely, and intimately. (2) To be able to reason about these facts. There is a world of literature available on methods of acquiring this first step in knowledge. You do not find a copy of your professional magazine (*e. g.*, *The Historical Outlook*) which does not give you true and tried devices for selecting, presenting, drilling, and memorizing historical facts. I shall assume that this is familiar to you, and shall confine my talk to the second phase of effective teaching, the use of reason in studying facts.

Let me say first that thinking about facts must follow the acquiring of facts. Whatever may be true in other subjects, it is

indubitably true in history that you do not approach a history unit with certain leading questions in your mind and then try to find the answers to those questions. There is no question until the study of facts has created a question. Some of you may begin a new assignment on China, for instance, with the question "Now, children, as we take up China today, what do we want to know about it?" If the child is either new to your method or is honest he will say "I don't want to know anything, except how to make a good grade." If, however, he knows your technique, he will glibly say "We want to know first, how China came to be such a great world power" and when your face shows that is not the right thing for him to want naturally, he will flounder, and with sufficient help and leading questions will finally say "We want to know why China, with all her vast resources and her long civilized history, is not a great world power." Then you will smile the self-satisfied smile of the teacher who has led young minds to her point of view, and will report on the fresh, original questions asked by the students.

But suppose you proceed naturally, and without any big questions plainly assign certain facts about China to be learned,—and I am not ashamed to have students learn facts, assigned facts, out of a textbook. After two days some boy says "Say, if China has all those resources and if China used gunpowder before we did, why can't she keep Japan out of Manchuria?" Then your question has arisen, as it should, out of facts; it has not been so used as to pre-judge your facts.

The only fair question, the only pedagogical question, is the one that comes after the facts and then seeks more facts. It is logically wrong to begin the American Revolution with a question that implies the inevitability, and the justification, of the colonial position, *e. g.*, "Why were the colonies justified in their Rebellion?" A simple

straight-forward study of colonial relations from 1750 will create a certain admiration for the growing British Empire, and if skilfully handled will bring up a healthy honest question, whether it was necessary to break up the empire. You will probably find a good high school class about evenly divided on this. And then will come the real honest-to-goodness reasoning that is the only justification you and I have for our jobs. Try this once and you will be thrilled with the difference between the mental activity of a class trying to decide a real question and the artificial interest in giving a good answer to a canned question.

Furthermore, this is the life we live. No providence sends us into the world to answer a question about Italy and France, but Laval and Grandi come: they are the facts; the question must come afterwards.

Only under the artificial conditions of school life are we sent to a magazine or to a newspaper to find the answer to our big problem. We are caught by a head-line, a hurried reading gives us some facts, we ask ourselves a question, probably to reject it ask ourselves another—until a real question, our personal question, arises. Then we intelligently look for more facts and in spite of ourselves find that we are really studying.

I listened recently to a high school class in government beginning the study of the Cabinet. Under a skilful set of questions the class stated that their interest was intense in deciding whether the Cabinet played a useful part in our system of government. I looked at them, red-blooded adolescent boys and girls of fifteen or sixteen, and I could see signs of interest in everything except the Cabinet. But in spite of faulty approach and a wrong method of assignment, the young lady could teach. Fact after fact came out in regard to the part played by the cabinet members, and soon two children, fortunately forgetting what they were supposed to be doing said almost at

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once, "Why, I don't see any good in their all meeting as a cabinet" and "Why, that's a good idea to have them meet together." From then on the class proceeded normally and successfully. Teach your facts first, then, and let the big questions grow out of them.

Isn't it almost a tragedy to take a character as intriguing as Andrew Jackson and tie up all the wide range of impressions and suggestions that might come from a study of his activities with two dictated leading questions on his "autocracy" and the "evidences of sectionalism"? Quite likely these two questions will be suggested by the pupils after the facts have been studied, but why squeeze the juice out before you give them the orange? The value of the whole study lies not in finding the facts to establish a statement but in finding a statement from the facts.

But facts, by themselves, will not cause thought. They must be so handled in a class period that they will call forth original and new points of view. May I give an illustration of three steps necessary in any teaching that goes beyond cramming the memory. The statement is read to a class: "A child was struck by a moving car at Sixth and Broad Streets, Richmond, at 5:30 P. M." The first step is to get the words of the story accurately: it was on Broad Street, not Main; in Richmond, not Roanoke; in the afternoon, not in the morning. (And I think you will bear me out in saying that few students can read accurately. Do your students have trouble with *Persia* and *Prussia*, *Swedish* and *Swiss*, *Gandhi* and *Grandi*?)

The second step is to picture the scene so that it is real—the busiest corner in Richmond, at the most crowded hour, a mass of shoppers, a procession of cars, a hurrying crowd, a child's cry, and a confused murmur. These two steps are necessary, but they are not yet studying; they are merely reading.

Studying begins when some mental process besides mere receptivity takes place. Now what starts turning over in your mind? Is it that children should not be allowed on crowded streets, is it that cars are dangerous in pedestrian sections, is it that part of the traffic should be routed off Broad Street, is it, perhaps, that Richmond is unkindly criticized by some motorists? The only vital point is that there be something started in the mind of the pupil. Personally, I detest having students tell me they have "read over" the assignment. That is just what too many of them do. Their part stops with the first step sometimes, generally with the second; rarely do they pause and ask themselves, "What of it if he did win a battle, or succeed to a throne?" Did it make a difference in the world; would you and I be the same if it had resulted otherwise; would I do the same thing; is this what I've always believed? Does it mean anything in history except a date that the Confederacy had to resort to the draft in 1862? Did your children stop and re-read their daily paper when the Fascist government declared for extreme disarmament?

Can a teacher teach children to think? Most emphatically, yes. You can help them read a paragraph, ask them what it suggests, tell them if they are still unable to think, try them on another, continue until each sentence and each idea will start its own reflex in their minds, gradually bring them to see parallels between past conditions and present, then ask them to take a newspaper incident, and try to judge its significance, before some editor or textbook writer has evaluated it. The only possible use of history is not to judge a past event—it is already past—but to use it in helping you judge the events that are happening in Richmond, in Washington, in Manchuria. For myself, I have no interest in a subject that is fixed, crystallized, finished. I want one in which I can take some

part; so I must approach the World War anew each year, and try to decide if I shall go into the struggle or if I will be neutral in thought as well as in fact.

In some way every historical event must be so vivified and identified that the pupil puts himself into a real situation and faces it as its own actors did. He must see himself in the situation, or he must see the situation as one of his own day. How can he learn to judge it openly and fairly if he already knows the answer and is merely looking for evidence to prove a ready-made thesis? He is in the position of the investigating committee recently appointed by President Hoover and told to bring in a report that "Admiral" Gardiner was guilty of a wilful untruth. The real question is not "How did a certain result come about?" but "What result would you have helped bring about?"

And note that this prepares him to take part in life. He is not going to have some pedagogically inclined friend to ask him each morning what problems he wishes to face in the bank, the shop, or the court. He is to meet facts, challenge them for their problem, and then meet it.

What part shall the teacher take in this training for reasoning, for original thought? Here are the principle functions of the teacher:

- To test,
- To correct false impressions,
- To furnish tools,
- To help organize,
- To add his contribution,
- To encourage thought questions.

Little need be said of the first four. Much as some of us dislike the drudgery of test questions, a certain number of them is necessary. No pupil should be able to say "I didn't know anything, but I contributed something to discussion and got by." There is no substitute for painstaking preparation of the facts of an assignment. And all of us realize the need of constant watchful-

ness lest words and ideas convey false impressions. Is a "minister" a preacher or a diplomat? Is "free trade" no tariff or no protective tariff? Equally necessary is familiarity with the material needed for next day's preparation. What more discouraging than "Maybe you can find something on this somewhere." And certainly our help is needed in organization. Possibly it is simple to the experienced teacher, but any organization beyond the familiar chronological or topical one of the textbook needs careful, constant, and sympathetic help.

Shall your organization be of the type that says "I don't know what the class will want to discuss today. I hope it will be the position of the troops before the battle of Gettysburg?" And then will you be duly surprised and delighted that the original children decide to discuss the position of the troops before the battle of Gettysburg? Does your contractor on the Federal Building in Richmond hope his men will decide to do a certain piece of work today? Not if he is going to keep his job, nor ought you and I if we are going to keep our jobs. The immediate unit, project, problem, class activity, or whatever you call it, must be thought out by you as a part of your logical objectives for your entire work. But you all know this, for you are successful teachers.

The last two functions call for more comment. One of our professional weaknesses is taking our fashions in pedagogy too seriously. . . My own path is covered with discarded educational panaceas. One of the latest was the socialized recitation. We are told to stay in the background, keep out of sight and presence, let the pupils manage and conduct their own recitations. Of course this is good in training for social activities, and not more than once a term it is an excellent "stunt." But remember that you must make a definite contribution in fact or explanation to each day's work.

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The more widely you read, the more illustrative material you know, the more you have travelled, the more your students will know that Robert E. Lee was a real man of flesh and blood and not an idealized figure of Southern mythology.

And, lastly, you are to encourage thought questions. Of course you will not fancy that they are thinking when you do some thinking out loud before your pupils today, and tomorrow they hand it back in perfect agreement with you. Oh, no, they are quoting — and flattering — you. Most thinking is disagreeing. Have you courage to allow a child to differ with you? Is it so vitally important that the child be right in his thinking? Isn't it more important that he be encouraged to try his wings, even if he is an awkward fledgling? Let him once learn to think for himself, and he will correct his mere factual error, but let him learn to accept what is handed him, and he is safe only so far as his pedagogical nurse follows him. What will you do with the boy who says, "I don't think the South had any good reason for secession"? Shoo him down with horror? I hope not. Tell him, "Well, there were a good many Southern people, especially in Virginia, who thought that way in 1861. Now keep on studying and see if you can convince the other children that you are right, but if they convince you, say so." Encourage that same boy to ask whether, if the Southern Confederacy had maintained its independence, it would have joined the United States in the World War. There is no past event which cannot in some way be likened to present-day happenings. I have a college senior now who must have had an excellent teacher in her freshman high school history. She can see Roman parallels to practically every present-day event, and having learned to judge Rome in terms of today eight years ago, she still thinks independently.

Don't you sometimes wish you could know whether you are really succeeding?

Latin and mathematics teachers have easy ways of measuring their success or failure. How shall I know? A student who knows more dates than I ever did was one of my poorest students. This is my only test: Can she stand on her own feet? Can she think for herself even if she happens to differ with me? And, a more deadly question, will I permit her to do it? Do any of us ask our students to think, and then dare them to do it? My old professor at the University of Chicago, Dr. A. C. McLaughlin, used to say, "The happiest moment in a real teacher's life is when he is met in combat by one of his own students—and beaten."

We might as well accept the fact that if *we* teach, *they* will think. And in their hands lies our fate.

"By all ye do, or fail to do
Your silent sullen *pupils*
Shall weigh your gods and you."

JAMES ELLIOTT WALMSLEY

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DESPAIR

THERE are numerous evidences that there is a growing feeling of despair among the people of our country. As one travels among country folk, he finds that many farmers have ceased planting certain otherwise productive crops and have neglected to harvest those ready for gathering, because, as they say, "What's the use?" In agriculture it is now as it was thirty years ago. The farmers' needs receive less attention and the farmers as a group seem unable to produce a sufficient number of outstanding leaders to reconstruct (if such a thing is possible) the system of agriculture and rural life to meet changed and changing conditions. Abandoned farms, crops without markets, and products sold at less than cost of producing them, not to say anything of other factors, have made many say "I give up. There is no use of doing anything."

Banks have failed and continue to do so, causing thousands suffering. Industrial enterprises of long standing have closed their doors and the employees are without means of a living. Credit is "frozen." Even the efforts of the Federal government seem destined to failure in restoring confidence and renewing industrial and commercial activities. Business men, once wont to plan and execute various enterprises, are now no longer active. They, in many cases, see no clear road to travel to overcome the difficulties they recognize. They too are saying "There is nothing I can do. It's no use trying."

In the last forty years, the common people of the United States have changed their standards of living to a higher level. This is true as regards health. It is true as to the kind of homes in which they live. It is true as to what they eat and wear. It is true as to travel and transportation. But now they are saying, "We must revert to standards of living of an earlier day. It's no use. I've tried and there is nothing that can be done except to give up the struggle."

If one examines the conditions that exist in inter-racial relationships throughout this world, he finds a similar condition. Notwithstanding the advances made in a better understanding, and in co-operative effort, there are vast areas in which we seem to have made no headway or to have reverted to a more undesirable condition. In the United States, we are most familiar with the "stress and strain" of relations between blacks and whites. But in certain parts of the world the white and yellow races maintain something akin to an armed truce. If we look at India, Brazil, Australia, and some other countries we find the same conditions there. Racial animosities and bitter conflicts seem inevitable to many. Instead of a brotherhood of man, there is a possibility of armed camps of races. These conditions lead many to view the improvement of racial relations as hopeless. They say

"What's the use? We can do nothing."

Even in educational circles, we say find something of the same spirit. At the recent sessions held in Washington, a dean of a college of education made this remark: "I find a spirit of despair and compromise. Our group has lost its crusading spirit."

Religious literature reflects the spirit of despair in varying degrees. But to such sources we should be able to go for better things. Other examples could be multiplied showing that now is a time when many accept the philosophy of despair.

What is the philosophy of despair? It is a surrender to baser things. It is acceptance of cynicism. It is acknowledgment of complete defeat. As students you, too, may at times feel tempted to accept such a philosophy of life. But if you do, you must reckon with the results.

Where will such a philosophy lead? It will lead you to neglect the best things of life—the delights of friends, the companionship of kindred souls, the glories and beauties of literature, art and music, and the support and solace of a better belief. It will carry you further—it will make you a pessimist, then a cynic, and finally a supercynic, despising all that is good and beautiful in God's world. It will make you ill at ease, and miserable. It will prevent any development; it will cause retrogression. It will finally lead to destruction!

The teacher's philosophy of life must *not* be a philosophy of despair. As a cynic he will infect others with this quality of a seared soul. A superintendent of a large city school system recently said: "The worst thing that happens to our young new teachers is contact with the few old cynics in the staff." The teacher with the philosophy of despair neglects human values and, hence, the best interests of childhood. The teacher whose only work is that of "hearing classes recite" may be one who has the philosophy of despair rather than an overload of work.

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As young people, you may make your choice of many different philosophies of life and work. I have tried to describe one to you. Are there no better? There are many that are better. May I present one to you, and a second on a much higher level. In Shakespeare's Hamlet, as Laertes is about to leave on a journey, the aged counselor of the King, Polonius, speaks to Laertes in the following vein:

"There; my blessing with thee!
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are of a most select and generous chief in that.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

This is a wise man's advice, you say. True it is. And it is a better philosophy by far than the alternative philosophy of despair. He who would follow such advice would be classed a successful man, but he may not have done his fellowmen much good.

The second life-view is a very complete, dynamic view, of which I shall mention but three cardinal principles of action. The first principle of our faith is that this is a world of law, which, if understood, works for the best. There are many who doubt this. I invite you to examine carefully even the greatest of disasters, and you will find that they occurred because of great laws functioning in our universe. Likewise, the many good things so exist. But if we know not these laws we can neither utilize them

nor guard against their operation upon us. Even too much affection can be given a child! Time will not permit a further elaboration of this principle.

The second principle was given us about two thousand years ago in these words: "Ye shall know the truth and it shall make you free." This principle follows the first as a supplement to it. If we discover a fact in science, we gain control and hence greater freedom of action. If we discover that life may be lived more abundantly by service to others, we find another line of activity freed—opened to us.

In the service of education, this principle is illustrated many times. The advances in the psychology of learning have given teachers greater control over guidance of learners—if teachers "know the truth." A more profound idea about the value of truth was probably never uttered.

The third principle follows the second. If we believe this a world of laws, and laws which are good, and if we believe that the "truth shall make us free," then what truth of all truths is probably most important for a sick and worried group of human beings? It too is, in my judgment, an old truth, but one scantily used by men. "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another." On this we can build a whole social fabric of living together happily and in a well worth while life. The inhabitants of this globe are slowly—painfully—discovering how fine it is to love one another. They are discovering that it is, as Henry Drummond put it, "the greatest thing in the world." It implies many subordinate principles of action and service. If we could marshal before us today those men and women both high and lowly, who have accepted this creed, what an array we would find! Can you guess what their testimony would be? They would have little to say of riches, little to say of power, but much to say of the wealth which comes of things

not material. These experiences come to the real teacher.

Some of the things I have said, I find in a few verses written by John Bretnall. They are worth repeating:

THE TEACHER

"If I but had my chance amid this world of stress
Wherein men press and plot and grasp,
Crowd virtue back, court their own prejudice,
I'd set a new apprenticeship for life,
Within the scheme to train the youth
I'd make for wiser purpose, content, plan.
Life would be learned in doing,
Things taught as they are,
Opening a way to stop our waste,
Cure social misfits, hold back the flood of hu-
man tears,
All this I'd do if I but had my chance—And
knew the way.

I have my chance,
Each day there come to me some souls
Unnurtured to the world. My opportunity,
My work shall be to find their need
And help survey a path
That leads to the supply;
Then give them learning as a life to live
Not as a garment to be worn,
Help them gain courage, endurance, fairness, in-
quiry.

From out the mass, mayhap, that here and there
Shall come a life equipped with skill
To heal some gap in industry,
Divide in honesty the shares of gain,
Help law learn justice,
Or build a better breed of men.
I may inspire some soul to seek
The magic of the Universe,
Reach out a hand to grasp
The harp of science, pluck its strings,
Till from their throbbing tunes
Some deep secret of the Master Mind,
Another thought of God made new to man.

The race turns slowly but it travels far.
Though small the angle,
Its rays, extended, wide diverge,
A latitude dividing right from wrong.
Though small my part,
I, too, may touch redemption for the race.
Some spark that I shall kindle may burn on
To glow in life, to gleam in immortality.¹

¹John Bretnal in *The Journal of the National Education Association*, April, 1931.

A. R. MEAD

Life is only a school in which the wiser men are, the longer they go on learning.

—SIR WILFRED GRENFELL

"HER VOICE WAS . . . SOFT"

WE HAVE read with a good deal of sympathy the advertisements of various salesmen offering to teach the correct use of English. The institutions they represent are the beauty shops of language. Here the poor aint's and he dont's and we was's and ought ofs go in to be stretched and lifted and smoothed until the speaker can open his lips without toads falling out of them. We are, frankly, a little skeptical of the results often promised, for the idea is too commonly expressed that a little grammar and spelling will accomplish what really needs a mental development. Good English comes from a good mind, and no other. And if the mind is good and the English irregular there may be merit in its irregularity.

But another kind of cultural beauty shop, if it exists, has few customers. The thronging girls on the noon-hour streets of a great city are hysterically aware of the need—

Still to be neat, still to be dressed
As if you were going to a feast.

And they patronize, we suspect, the grammar shops occasionally, for an overheard conversation will sometimes have an almost priggish correctness in the selection of words. But, O the voices! And O the enunciation! The Darwinian idea that fine clothes, like fine feathers, are sex appeals and nothing else was much too simple. A good share of this finery has nothing to do with sex. It is an attempt to assert the social position of the wearer in a great anonymous civilization where the individual must assert or be unknown. The hat says, "I am not too poor"; the dress, "I have some taste"; the shoes, "I know style when I see it." This is what advertisers call, in its inverted form, the snob appeal, but the term is harsh. Put a strange chicken in a chicken yard and watch; it after awhile begins to plume and strut a little, as if to say,

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"I myself am somebody, I am one of you and not of the lowliest!" In a village everyone is known. Strutting is useless. But in a city, the anonymous he or she must hang out some signal to the crowd, some advertisement of native worth. The female signals the male, but not only the male; she informs her betters in taste, in style, in spending money, that she herself has points which they can appreciate.

How strange then that language, and particularly voice, has been so neglected. For there is no worse advertisement than bad speaking. It is like the scent of the fox; the bearer cannot escape from it, all the neighborhood is aware. Character, temperament, personality, are elusive and hard to come at; clothes tell the story quickly, though only a part of it; but the voice, that most characteristic of all human attributes, seems to be the essential person himself, shedding the husk of bought adornments, telling as much of the truth as can be told in a brief contact, saying far more than the words. Let her spend her mornings at the beautifiers, her afternoons at the dress-makers, and still one word will betray her. She may have a good heart, and a sterling character, and a passable mind, and still that rasp and slide over the English vowels, that choke on the consonants, and breath nasally sharpened, will undo all her promises. It takes a more than passable beauty to make up for squawks and shrillings, which is one reason perhaps why so many girls nowadays seem to prefer to do their hugging by daylight.

Indeed, a worldly wise adviser of sensitive youth would certainly urge upon the socially minded more care in speaking and in their choice of books. For if one can tell a little about character and all about looks from the face, it is the book on the table, or the magazine under the arm, or the newspaper being read, that reveals the mental status to a curious observer; it is the voice which denotes, more sharply and on

the whole more accurately than anything else, a cultural classification, and distinguishes the golden from the gilded.—*The Saturday Review of Literature.*

AN UP-TO-DATE FAIRY TALE

ONCE upon a time, my dears, far up on the Statistical Mountains, with their beautiful bell-shaped curves, and on those lovely benches which clever people call the Learning Plateaux, there dwelt the queerest race of boys and girls imaginable. They belonged to the fairy people, of course, and had no fathers and mothers, but they were very carefully brought up by wise old men with long gray beards and thick spectacles who were called Scientists.

You will wonder what kind of fairies these boys and girls were. They were neither elves nor gnomes; they were not related to Mother Goose or to Peter Pan; they were neither afraid of Bears nor Spiders. Indeed, they didn't believe in any fairies except themselves, because the wise Scientists had brought them up that way.

They were called Norms, and sometimes Modes or Medians; but I think they liked best to be called Norms, because it is such a dignified name. You see, there had been Norms since the beginning of the world, but until the Scientists began taking care of them, they had wandered about very unhappily, and had always hidden themselves in caves and dark forests. But that was all changed, my dears, when the Scientists found them a comfortable home of their own in the Statistical Mountains.

The Norms were odd in many ways; their bodies were vague and not a bit like those of ordinary boys and girls. Sometimes they were big and beautiful, and sometimes they were small and crooked, because their appearance depended upon which Scientist had been taking care of them last. Every once in a while they vanished altogether,

but you can be quite sure they were still there because they appeared again the very moment that the Scientists stopped arguing about them.

All children love to play, so of course the Norms played too. There were lots of nice animals on the Learning Plateaux and the Norms watched them doing clever tricks. The cats escaped from puzzle-boxes, the rats ran through mazes, the fish bumped their noses against glass plates, the porcupines ate cabbages with one hand and carrots with the other, the monkeys fitted poles together to reach bananas, and the dogs did all sorts of smart things without any brains at all. Everything was nicely arranged, because if the animals behaved well the Scientists turned them into Norms too—and what could be better than that?

But the Norms had toys as well as animals, not silly mechanical trains and talking dolls, because no Norm would play with anything so uninteresting, but wonderful new toys which the Scientists made for them, such as Ergographs and Standard Deviations, and you can be sure they just loved playing with them. Whenever a Scientist made a toy, all the Norms became tremendously excited and begged him to let them have it; because they knew that playing with it would change their appearance again, and having your body changed is a wonderful game. You see, the Norms were exactly like human beings in this way; they got no fun out of staying the same all the time; the big Norms wanted to be small and the crooked ones wanted to be beautiful.

You mustn't think, though, that they did nothing but play—they were too well brought up for that. Every week day, and sometimes even on Sundays, they took Intelligence Tests and had Personality Ratings. They couldn't run out of work, because the Scientists were never quite satisfied, and kept on inventing new things for them to do. You can't begin to imagine how clever the Norms were; they could

read Latin and Hindustani, they could solve problems in Mathematics and Chemistry, they could draw and write and play musical instruments. There was no subject in any school or university which they couldn't handle with ease. They were fairies, you see, and fairies can do almost anything.

Sometimes a Scientist, especially a young eager one whose beard was only half-grown and whose spectacles were still thin, would work the Norms terribly hard. He might make them multiply four-place numbers in their heads for five days, to see if he could fatigue them, or he might shut them up in a badly ventilated room to see if it would affect their Silent Reading Rate. You would think that this treatment would worry the Norms, but the quaint little creatures liked it; they jumped about and changed their shapes all the time.

One little group of Norms had the oddest task of all; these were the Alcohol Norms, and for the life of them they couldn't keep steady. In fact, the Scientists almost despaired of them. On one Monday they would drink 50 c.cs. of alcohol and shoot bulls-eyes, while on the next Monday they would drink the same quantity and miss the target altogether. Nobody could tell what they would do next, and they changed their size every time a different person looked at them.

The Tobacco Norms were almost as bad, especially the ones that smoked cigarettes, because the Scientists chiefly smoked pipes. The result was that the poor little Cigarette Norms were terribly pale and shaky, while the Pipe Norms went about all day with a well-fed, contented look and did marvelously well in their dot-hitting and mirror-writing.

But the hardest thing the Norms were made to do was to climb from one Learning Plateau to another. They just hated to leave their friends behind, and to crawl on their hands and knees up the steep, rocky mountain-side. Quite often they fell down

and hurt themselves badly, and, as if this climbing were not dangerous enough in itself, there was an ugly giant called the Physiological Limit, who sometimes hit a struggling Norm over the head with a big club.

Naturally the Scientists tried to help them along, but since each Scientist had a different way of doing it, the Norms made slow progress. The older Scientists drove them up at a tremendous rate with birch-rod and uncomplimentary names, and the younger ones coaxed them up with kind words and striped candy. In the first case the Norms arrived weak and bleeding at the top, and in the second they usually didn't arrive at all.

Ever so often the Scientists had a meeting about building a great highway, to be called the Royal Road, from each Plateau to the next, but they quarreled so much about the best route and the proper paving, that nothing was ever done about it.

So, perhaps, my dears, it's better to be boys and girls after all. When you consider everything, it really isn't much fun being a Norm.—*The B. C. Teacher.*

SCHOLARSHIP AND CULTURE

Acquaintance with the best is scholarship; the fruit of it, ripening into refinement, elevation, sensitiveness, courage, and wisdom, is culture. This acquaintance with the best may be but a speaking acquaintance, able merely to recognize and locate against any future need of expansion, or it may be ultimate and free and happy. It may vary also from field to field, but the scholar may be at home in every province of the intellectual realm, certainly able to read its significance.—WILLIAM LOUIS POTEAT.

The character of adult reading may be a matter of far greater importance to a democratic society than the percentage of illiteracy.—DOUGLAS WAPLES AND RALPH TYLER.

ENGLISH COUNCIL MEETING

The National Council of Teachers of English, 211 W. 68th St., Chicago, will hold its annual meeting in Memphis, Tennessee, November 24-26. This is the first time the Council has met in the far South since the meeting in Chattanooga in 1922. The Council has a membership of more than six thousand high school and college teachers, representing every section of the United States. The annual meeting, always held during the Thanksgiving holidays, attracts a large attendance. Educators of national reputation discuss not only classroom topics but the larger aspects of English that interest laymen.

The Council has recently published a program of recreational reading for high school students, the "Home Reading List," which is accomplishing much in improving the reading habits of young people. It is preparing to issue in the immediate future a similar reading list of pleasant books for the use of students in grades VII through IX, and another for grades below the seventh; and in the course of a few months there will be issued the Sterling A. Leonard monographs giving the results of some nation-wide balloting on the subject of disputed matters of usage in grammar.

The officers of the National Council are: President, Dr. Stella S. Center, of Georgia and New York; First Vice-President, Dr. C. J. Campbell, University of Michigan; Second Vice-President, Dr. Frances R. Dearborn, Johns Hopkins University; Secretary-Treasurer, W. Wilbur Hatfield, Chicago Normal College; Auditor, Dr. Ward H. Green, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

To live happily is an inward power of the soul.—MARCUS AURELIUS.

To rule one's self is in reality the greatest triumph.—J. LUBBOCK.

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EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

MONEY SPENDING A SCIENCE

How to handle the family income, which according to one investigator is spent largely by women and at the rate of \$130,000 a minute, is one of the subjects to which special attention is directed in the evening schools in home economics, conducted throughout the country, under the national vocational education program.

The management of the family income, according to the annual report of the Federal Board for Vocational Education, represents a division of economics, the importance of which is receiving recognition daily.

Much attention has been devoted during the past year in vocational home economics evening classes for adult women to the teaching of home management and the effective feeding, clothing, and housing of families at low income levels. The income in homes in communities studied by the Board is low for the majority of families—a greater percentage being below the comfort level than above—so that home economics instruction needs constantly to emphasize what can be done on a limited income.

The Board's studies have shown, also,

that much of the illness in homes can be directly controlled by a better selection of food and more intelligent dealing with causes which can be removed or lessened by better hygienic and sanitary practices. For this reason stress has been laid on these factors in evening classes.

That homemakers are especially interested in courses covering child care and training, including proper feeding and clothing, the development of good health practices and habits, and adequate facilities for rest and recreation, is evidenced, the report explains, by requests for such courses. The need and demand for organized training in home making in vocational classes is constantly increasing, it is shown, and the expansion of the program in the states is limited only by the lack of funds for maintenance.

Adult homemakers enrolled in evening vocational home economics classes federally aided in 1931 numbered 124,263, an increase of 26,888 or 27.6 per cent over 1930. This figure does not include more than 10,000 adult women enrolled in vocational home-making classes supported wholly from state or local funds or both.

LIBRARIES DURING THE DEPRESSION

THE part that public libraries are having and may have in the promotion of intelligent thinking and action during times of economic stress is indicated in the following resolution adopted by the Council of the American Library Association and just made public:

"The American Library Association believes that the depression offers a challenge to the public libraries of America, as it does to newspapers, magazines and other agencies for the diffusion of knowledge. The book supply, reading room space and personnel of libraries are being taxed now as never before because of the unprecedented number of readers and students.

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Economic insecurity breeds intellectual unrest, sending many thoughtful men and women to books, while idleness and lack of funds increase the popularity of reading as recreation. The loss of a job makes a man think about his educational equipment for another job.

"The American Library Association recognizes the extraordinary difficulties brought about by the economic situation and, while advising all reasonable economy, calls upon library trustees to champion the cause of the library before appropriating bodies, pointing out the necessity of maintaining, in spite of all obstacles, those essential services which promote intelligent thinking and vocational education or re-education, and which help to keep up the public morale."

Reports from libraries in all sections of the country reveal crowded conditions and greatly increased demand for service. A summary of reports from 36 cities exceeding 200,000 population shows an increase of more than 8,000,000—or 10 per cent—in demand for reading material. In some instances an increase in book circulation as great as 42 per cent has been noted. To meet these unusual conditions the American Library Association, through its headquarters office, is acting as a clearing house to keep librarians informed of ways and means of handling budget and administrative problems, as well as the increased call for vocational service to men and women with enforced leisure.

WHY HAVE SCHOOLS?

HORACE MANN said, "In our country and our times, no man is worthy the honored name of statesman who does not include practicable education of the people in all plans of administration."

Let us see if the statesmen themselves agreed with this qualification. Twenty years

or more before American Independence, Benjamin Franklin said: "The good education of youth has been esteemed by wise men in all ages as the surest foundation of the happiness both of private families and of commonwealths." Immediately after Independence, Washington said: "Knowledge is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their impressions so immediately from the sense of the community as in ours, it is proportionately essential." About the same time Jefferson said: "It is an axiom in my mind that our liberty can never be safe but in the hands of the people themselves, and that, too, of the people with a certain degree of instruction. This is the business of the state, and on a general plan." James Madison said: "A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prolog to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both. The people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." More recently Woodrow Wilson said: "Without popular education no government which rests on popular action can long endure; the people must be schooled in the knowledge and if possible in the virtues upon which the maintenance and success of free institutions depend." Herbert Hoover says: "Self-government can succeed only through an instructed electorate. The more complex the problems of the nation become, the greater the need for more and more advanced instruction."

These and thousands of similar expressions from other statesmen, patriots, and authorities on civic affairs prove that schools are necessary to preserve our state and nation and their governments of the people, by the people, and for the people; and of course this means that schools are necessary to preserve all the institutions that have grown up under our form of government. The common schools are the

means of making effective the six purposes of our government set forth in the preamble to the Constitution.

WHY HAVE TEACHERS?

Without teachers there would be no schools; for teachers are the absolutely essential workers that make the schools effective. Teachers constitute the army of defense against the devastating enemy, ignorance, and are just as necessary as any army of defense against any conceivable foreign enemy or domestic rebellion. That is what great statesmen and educators mean when they say that a high general level of trained intelligence is absolutely necessary in a democracy; for the teachers constitute the agency for training the intelligence. Therefore, the state for its own self-preservation provides that teachers be employed; prescribes their qualifications, maintains colleges and universities for their education and special training, and levies taxes for their remuneration.—*Illinois Teacher*.

THE BULL IN THE CHINA SHOP

Commenting on the proposal in Kansas that a new textbook commission be appointed to be composed of "business men with no more than one educator as a member," William Allen White writes in the *Emporia Gazette*:

"A sillier recommendation is not imaginable. The selection of textbooks is not a business man's job. It would be as foolish to put a bunch of doctors in control of selecting a course of study for engineers. The selection of textbooks is an expert's job. It cannot be done by any man hauled in off the street. It must be done by men in the teaching profession."

THE TRAINING OF THE HUMAN PLANT

All animal life is sensitive to environment, but of all living things the child is the

most sensitive. Surroundings act upon it as the outside world acts upon the plate of the camera. Every possible influence will leave its impress upon the child, and the traits which it inherited will be overcome to a certain extent, in many cases being even more apparent than heredity.

The child is like a cut diamond, its many facets receiving sharp, clear impressions not possible to a pebble, with this difference, however, that the change wrought in the child from the influences without becomes constitutional and ingrained. A child absorbs environment. It is the most susceptible thing in the world to influence, and if that force be applied rightly and constantly when the child is in its most receptive condition, the effect will be pronounced, immediate, and permanent.—LUTHER BURBANK.

A nation's concern over education measures its interest in its own future.

As long as the life of society goes on normally, education is generally acknowledged as an important social function, yet it does not attract much public attention; but when some crisis comes, when a depression is felt in the social atmosphere or some political cataclysm occurs, then people turn to education as a remedy and panacea against the evils of the time.—H. G. WELLS.

KNOWLEDGE is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their impressions so immediately from the sense of the community as in ours, it is proportionately essential.—*George Washington*.

IT IS AN AXIOM in my mind that our liberty can never be safe but in the hands of the people themselves, and that, too, of the people with a certain degree of instruction. This is the business of the state, and on a general plan.—*Thomas Jefferson*.

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THE READING TABLE

THE STORY OF MODERN PROGRESS. By Willis Mason West. New York: Allyn and Bacon, 1931. Pp. 802. \$2.00.

This is a new edition of Professor West's book of the same title. It is gotten up in the handsome style that one expects to find in all the Allyn and Bacon publications, the maps and other illustrations being very attractive. The index is unusually full. However, the teacher will probably regret the lack of review questions at the ends of the several chapters. The organization of the volume is also subject to rather serious criticism, especially in Parts VII, VIII, IX, and X. For example, it is hard to see why the accounts of Mussolini in Italy and of Gandhi in India, and of the Irish Free State, should be put near the middle of the book, with accounts of the Latin American revolutions, the World War, the League of Nations, and many other things following, that really came before in time, some as much as a century. And one is disappointed, I think, in looking over the outline of contents in vain for a chapter heading that definitely locates the League of Nations. One must turn to the index or make a rather careful search through the pages to locate the several rather fragmentary statements concerning it.

J. W. W.

EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHING. By Charles W. Knudsen. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1932. Pp. 538. \$2.50.

Here is a book in supervision in secondary schools written as much for the teacher as for the supervisor, with the conscious purpose of bringing into greater harmony the interests of both.

The book is divided into four parts and an appendix, all knit together into a continuous program. Part I considers the types of ability that are believed to constitute teacher achievement, and the learning exercises she may use in developing the de-

sired skills, knowledge, and patterns of conduct on the part of the pupils. Part II consists of six chapters which are concerned with the methods for evaluating and improving instruction. Here is discussed the use of rating devices for evaluating teaching and group control, and the use of standardized tests for the same purpose. Part III takes up the problem of initiating a program of supervision, together with suggested steps. A good chapter on the conference is included. Part IV is concerned with methods of evaluating the supervisory program as a whole. Criteria for evaluating the results of supervision are given and discussed. The appendix includes three stenographic reports of lessons. These are actual unrevised reports and are significant for the problems they present of teachers' deficiencies. The appendix concludes with a simple method of calculating the coefficient of correlation.

The book is particularly striking for its careful scientific approach to the problem of supervision and for the absence of technical jargon which so often lessens the value of such a book for beginners. C. P. S.

A CHILD'S LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON. By Louise Embree. Illustrated by Clotilde Embree. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc. 1932. Pp. 255. \$2.50.

A beautiful book whose author makes America's great hero live again for children from six to eleven years of age. It takes up the story with Washington's early boyhood and carries it through until his death, telling it in simple, colorful language that will delight those for whom it was written. It abounds with intimate descriptions of all the interesting things that seem to have belonged to that great man's life. The bibliography indicates that the author has taken considerable pains to give an authentic account. What a charming tribute at this 200th anniversary of his birth! The illustrations must not be neglected, for they

add much to the charm of the book, comprising, as they do, fifty silhouettes quick with life and vigor and maps which carry out the silhouette idea. It's the sort of reading one likes to put into the hands of children.

B. J. L.

OUR WORLD TODAY. By DeForest Stull and Roy W. Hatch. New York: Allyn and Bacon. 1931. Pp. 721. \$2.00.

These two sentences of the preface state a commendable purpose: "It is a geography in the true sense, but links its story with history and the other social studies wherever such correlation vivifies for the pupil the topic under consideration. It seeks to preserve a sensible mean between the restricted science of the physiographer and the confusing incongruities of certain fusion courses."

The book recommends itself by such characteristics as the liberal use of splendid illustrations and other visualizing aids, the helps and activities throughout the text, and the stressing of reasons on nearly every page. Although many of the maps have place names in both the Anglicized spelling and also that spelling used officially in the country of their occurrence, only the Anglicized spelling is used in the discussions of the text. The material regarding the countries of each part of the world is organized about a plan considering the commodities produced and the industries of the area. All seventh and eighth grade teachers using the unit plan of study will therefore find this an unusually helpful reference.

R. M. H.

"THERE IS ONE DEBT for which no moratorium can with safety be declared. It is the one to which the Minister of Education in England, H. A. L. Fisher, referred, in the midst of the war, 'The eternal debt of maturity to childhood and youth—education'."—*Dr. John H. Finley in New York Times.*

NEWS OF THE COLLEGE AND ITS ALUMNAE

Following the election of major officers of the student body on February 11, a second election was held for other officers on March 1. The newly-elected officers are:

Sally Face, Hampton, vice-president Student Government; Laura Melcher, Winston-Salem, N. C., secretary-treasurer Student Government; Virginia Ruby, Lynchburg, vice-president Y. W. C. A.; Elizabeth Tudor, Thomasville, N. C., secretary Y. W. C. A., Rebecca Comer, Roanoke, treasurer Y. W. C. A.; Margaret Campbell, Richmond, vice-president Athletic Association; Marietta Melson, Eastern Shore, business manager Athletic Association; Virginia Jones, Gordonsville, business manager *Breeze*; Catherine Manke, Hampton, business manager *Schoolma'am*; Sarah Lemon, Atlanta, Georgia, editor-in-chief *Handbook*; Lois Bishop, Norfolk, recorder-of-points; Pamela Parkins, Norfolk, head cheer leader.

In celebration of Drama week, the new members of the Stratford Dramatic Club presented on Saturday, February 13, in Wilson Hall, two one-act plays, *Bargains in Cathay* by Rachel Field, and *Washington's First Defeat* by Charles Nirdlinger.

The cast of *Bargains in Cathay*:

Miss Emily Gray, Jaquelyn Johnston; Jerry O'Brien, Edna Motley; Miss Doty, Jane Maphis; Thompson Williams, Virginia Hallett; Miss Bliss, Mildred Simpson; Mr. Royce, Janie Shaver; A gentleman from New York, Elizabeth Carson.

In contrast with the ultra-modern first playlet was the Colonial charm of antebellum days which provided the setting for the second number. An extremely humorous picture was painted of George Washington's clumsiness in relation to his love affair with a southern belle, Lucy Grimes. Her refusal of his offer of marriage proved

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that the redoubtable Washington could be defeated. The cast of *Washington's First Defeat*:

Lucy Grimes, Mildred Simpson; George Washington, Janie Shaver; Camellia, Jane Maphis.

Rolling up a score of 51-9, the Harrisonburg varsity overwhelmed Westhampton basketball team in the second game of the season. The pass work of the H. T. C. sextet was the outstanding feature of the game. The Westhampton forwards were excellent shots and made practically every goal they attempted. Latane was high scorer for Westhampton with six points. High scorers for H. T. C. for the second time this year, were Hobbs, with 27, and Sullivan a close second, with 20.

The line-up follows:

WESTHAMPTON (9)	HARRISONBURG (57)
Latane (C) R. F.	Hobbs
Crews L. F.	Sullivan
Caster J. C.	Neblett
Neals S. C.	Rolston
Foshett R. G.	Duke
Lowe L. G.	Farinholt (C)

Substitutes: Stiff, Westhampton; Pittman, Bowen, Van Landingham, H. T. C.

Referee: Moore, William and Mary.

Inflicting the first defeat which Savage has suffered in three years, H. T. C. continued its successful season with a victory of 35-15, February 27. Savage School of Physical Education included Harrisonburg in its southern tour with William and Mary, the other Virginia opponent.

Neblett and Rolston dominated at center, being far superior in foot work and pass work to the visitors. Savage toward the end of the game was forced to adopt the policy of passing over the center areas. Sullivan, the varsity's veteran forward, was forced out of the game in the first five minutes, but not before she and Hobbs had piled up a score of 17. Hobbs again was

high scorer for the game with a record of 18 points.

In the second half Savage made a big drive and mounted up her score, but found it impossible to surpass Harrisonburg.

The line-up follows:

SAVAGE (15)	H. T. C. (35)
Hautt (10) R. F.	Hobbs (18)
Casparire (1) L. F.	Sullivan (8)
Dickson J. C.	Neblett
Evans (C) S. C.	Rolston
Riley R. G.	Duke
Bernstein L. G.	Farinholt (C)

Substitutes: Savage—Ferenzak (4), Shean, Sheaham; H. T. C.—Pittman scoring (3), Bowen (6).

Rounding out a brilliant season of undefeated encounters on her own floor, the H. T. C. varsity sextet defeated her ancient rival, the Farmville basketball team, by the score of 32-25 in a hard-fought, tight game.

Almost immediately after the referee's whistle sounded for the beginning of the game, Farmville scored; Harrisonburg retaliated, and the fight was on! The score see-sawed from H. T. C. to F. T. C. and back again. At the end of the half, the teams stood 14-10 with the visitors in the lead. Refreshed by the rest, Harrisonburg came back with a vengeance to trounce the Blue and White by the final score. Amid wild enthusiasm and cheering of the crowd, the Purple and Gold swept on to victory.

According to all comments, this was the best game Harrisonburg has ever played and Farmville possesses one of the best teams Harrisonburg has ever encountered. It is especially fitting that the season should be terminated with such a flourish, for this game marks for five members of the H. T. C. team—Mary Farinholt, captain; Anna Lyons Sullivan, former captain; Frances Ralston; Julia Duke; Kitty Bowen—the end of collegiate basketball participation.

H. T. C. (32)	F. T. C. (25)
Sullivan (16) R. F.	Snedgar (10)

Hobbs (16)L. F. Fraser (15)
 NeblettJ. C. Quisenberry
 RolstonS. C. Edwards
 Farinholt (C) R. G. Sonders (C)
 DukeL. G. Burger
 Officials: Fogg, Rogers (Sweetbriar).
 Scorers: Ross, Peterson.
 Timekeeper: Bosworth, Wherrett.

The midwinter formal dance sponsored by the Bluestone Cotillion Club was held in the Big Gym, February 27, from eight-thirty until twelve.

Jan Campbell and his eleven-piece orchestra from Berkeley, West Virginia, were seated under an arch of an old-fashioned porch. The color scheme of blue and white was carried out. Swirling lights cast entrancing shadows over the vari-hued dresses of the girls, blending them with the somber black and white of the men, the grey of cadet uniforms, and the white paletots of V. P. I. and V. M. I. seniors.

Eva Holland, Eastville, president of the club, with Reid Lineweaver, Harrisonburg, led the figure, an "H."

All of the well-known men's colleges in Virginia were represented among the hundred and thirty-three couples or in the stag line. Virginia, V. P. I., Washington and Lee, William and Mary, Richmond University, all sent their quota.

Greetings from the old girls in many corners of the earth reach the college from time to time; some of those recently heard from are:

Esther Derring, New York City.
 Gertrude and Dolly Smith, Washington, D. C.
 Gaylord Gibson, Delaplane.
 Ada Lee Berry, Charlottesville.
 Grace Heyl, Atlanta.
 Barbara Steele, Stephens City.
 Mary K. Lasley, Campbell.
 Myrtle Haden, Gretna.
 Pearle Keister, Staunton.
 Mrs. Esther Coulburn Dance, Roanoke.
 Ella Stover, Alexandria.
 Mrs. Kate Taylor Sinclair, Bluefield, West Virginia.
 Nell Matthews, Charlie Hope.
 Nellie Pace, Roanoke.

Marjorie Snead, University of Virginia.
 Mrs. Edith Martz Beaver, Round Hill.
 Jane Campbell, Old Church.
 Helen Goodson, Norfolk.
 Virginia Little, Carysbrooke.
 Mary Armentrout, University of Virginia.
 Mrs. Katherine Wilmoth Robinson, Rockville, Maryland.
 Mrs. Edmonia Shepperson Chermiside, Orange.
 Katherine Mosby, Columbia.
 Mrs. Esther Saunders, Tappahannock.
 Hazel Davis, Burke.
 Mary Moore Aldhizer, Washington, D. C.
 Shirley Miller, Charlottesville.
 Mary Stallings, Suffolk.
 Mrs. Leila Naylor Hensley, Elkton.
 Wintie Heatwole, Dayton.
 Susie Geoghegan, Danville.
 Nathalie Hardy, Pamplin.
 Mrs. Lillian Millner Garrison, Norfolk.
 Mrs. Nettie Anderson Kallmyer, Waynesboro.
 Virginia R. Gilliam, Petersburg.
 Marie Snead, Carysbrooke.
 Mrs. Margaret Guntner Boswell, North Carolina.
 Lelouise Edwards, Norfolk.
 Jewell Hall, Washington.
 Mrs. Margaret Proctor Rolston, New Hope.
 Clara Belle Smith, Chester.
 Mrs. Lucile Early Fray, Advance Mills.
 Anna and Helen Ward, Chester.
 Mrs. Rosa Hopkins Agee, Tazewell.
 Lucy Gilliam, Petersburg.
 Janet Farrar, Cleveland, Ohio.
 Sallie Henley, West Point.
 Mary Lee Bishop, Proffitt.
 Mrs. Octavia Goode Maxwell, Waynesboro.
 Ida Hicks, Sante Fe, New Mexico.
 Mrs. John Pace (Althea Cox) Ridgeway, Virginia.
 Sara Frances Ralston, Staunton, Virginia.
 Laura Cameron, McLean, Virginia.
 Mrs. G. W. Spicer (Leone Reaves) University, Virginia.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

WALTER BARNES is professor of the teaching of English in New York University, and an active and energetic member of the National Council of Teachers of English. Dr. Barnes is author of numerous volumes, among them *The New Democracy in the Teaching of English*, *The Children's Poets*, and the recent *English for American High Schools*.

WILLIAM R. SMITHEY is professor of secondary education at the University of Virginia, and editor of *Secondary Education in Virginia*, a quarterly published at the University of Virginia for the Virginia Committee for Research in Secondary Education.

JAMES ELLIOTT WALMSLEY is professor of history in the State Teachers College at Farmville. This paper was read before a meeting of the Social Science section at the last Educational Conference in Richmond.

A. R. MEAD is professor of education at the University of Florida at Gainesville. His paper was given as a lecture before the students of the State Teachers College at Harrisonburg on February 24, 1932.

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